

STUDENTS RESPONSES TO THE FILM *Still Killing Us Softly*

1. Conclusion: Advertising shapes our values, attitudes, and feelings, even if we think we are not being influenced.

Evidence:

Women should strive to look perfect and anything less is unacceptable says TV.
Heavy use of younger women in ads
Slim models who are not typical are usually used
The models are touched up to look perfect.
Ads are run telling women to buy this or they will not be loved and accepted.

Women are depicted as sexual objects or sexual enticements.
The positioning of women in ads
The few clothes women in ads wear
A focus on the cleavage
Dismembered parts of her body are shown

2. One of Jean Kilbourne's conclusions is that the way women are depicted leads directly and indirectly to physical violence against women. I am open to this thought but do not think she was persuasive. Yes, there are ads which are open to a violent interpretation, but what percent of ads are like that. I think she selectively chose her ads, but not through a representative approach. We may watch a lot of ads; we may see a lot of women in a context of violent images, but does that lead to violence toward women. I would like to hear more solid research studies cited rather than examples.

3. I am convinced that we need to take a second look at what ads do to our views of women. But maybe we need to also look at the way men are shown.

To what extent do ads shape our view of men and women and to what extent do ads follow current fashions in our culture? I think this question needed more emphasis in the film.

Jean did mention women of color but I think there is more to that. The overwhelming image on our TV is of a skinny white women who to me looks underfed. Does this image contribute to the fact that so many women in our culture are on diets and young women have eating disorders?

4. The film started me to think of some questions from a historical perspective. Are the images shown on U. S . TV of women new images ? Haven't women in many cultures been shown in a stereotypical way? What does the history of art tell us? Are the print media different than TV? How were women shown in the 1940s and 1950s on radio? Is violence increasing against women? or are women reporting it more? or is the violence being done by a few and it appears as the many? or are women today more in contact with men which produces more opportunities for violence?

Wednesday 12/ 17/97 Final Assignment
2-hour project

Still Killing Us Softly film guide

This video is of a speech, given by Jean Kilbourne, on the portrayal of women in advertising. In the video Jean Kilbourne is giving her speech to an audience of college students. Her main point is to give examples of how women are negatively portrayed by the media. Her conclusion is that advertising shapes our values, attitudes, and our feelings, even if we think that we are not being influenced. She says that “advertising is the most powerful force” to determine our views.

Look for these statements made by Jean Kilbourne throughout the video (see if you can find evidence to support these claims). :

- ◆ “1 out of 5 college women suffers from an eating disorder”
- ◆ “80% of women think they are fat”
- ◆ “80% of fourth graders are on a diet”
- ◆ “nuclear families only account for 12 percent of American households”
- ◆ “one in four little girls, and one in ten little boys are sexually molested”
- ◆ “advertising creates a devaluation of women by men”

-Be able to recognize objectivity with words like “might,” “possible,” or “suggest..”

Know the difference between objectivity and “facts.”* A fact must be supported with sources and evidence.

-Try to look for statements which sound like opinions.

Questions to answer as you watch or after you have viewed the film:

1. What evidence did you find to support the main points of Kilbourne’s speech’?
2. Were any propaganda techniques used in her speech?
3. What words or phrases did she use to make her speech objective, if any?
4. Were all members of society fairly represented in her speech, since she is discussing a societal problem?
5. Has advertising changed since this speech was given? Do you see any changes in today’s advertising? Are the ads she used in her speech representative of ads you have seen?
6. Are there any other effects advertising may have on society, besides on women’? Did Jean Kilbourne fairly mention the effects ads have on men’?
7. Do you think her conclusions were supported?
8. How was the speaker’s credibility (sarcasm, personality)? Do you think that the topic was **ap proached** in an appropriate manner?